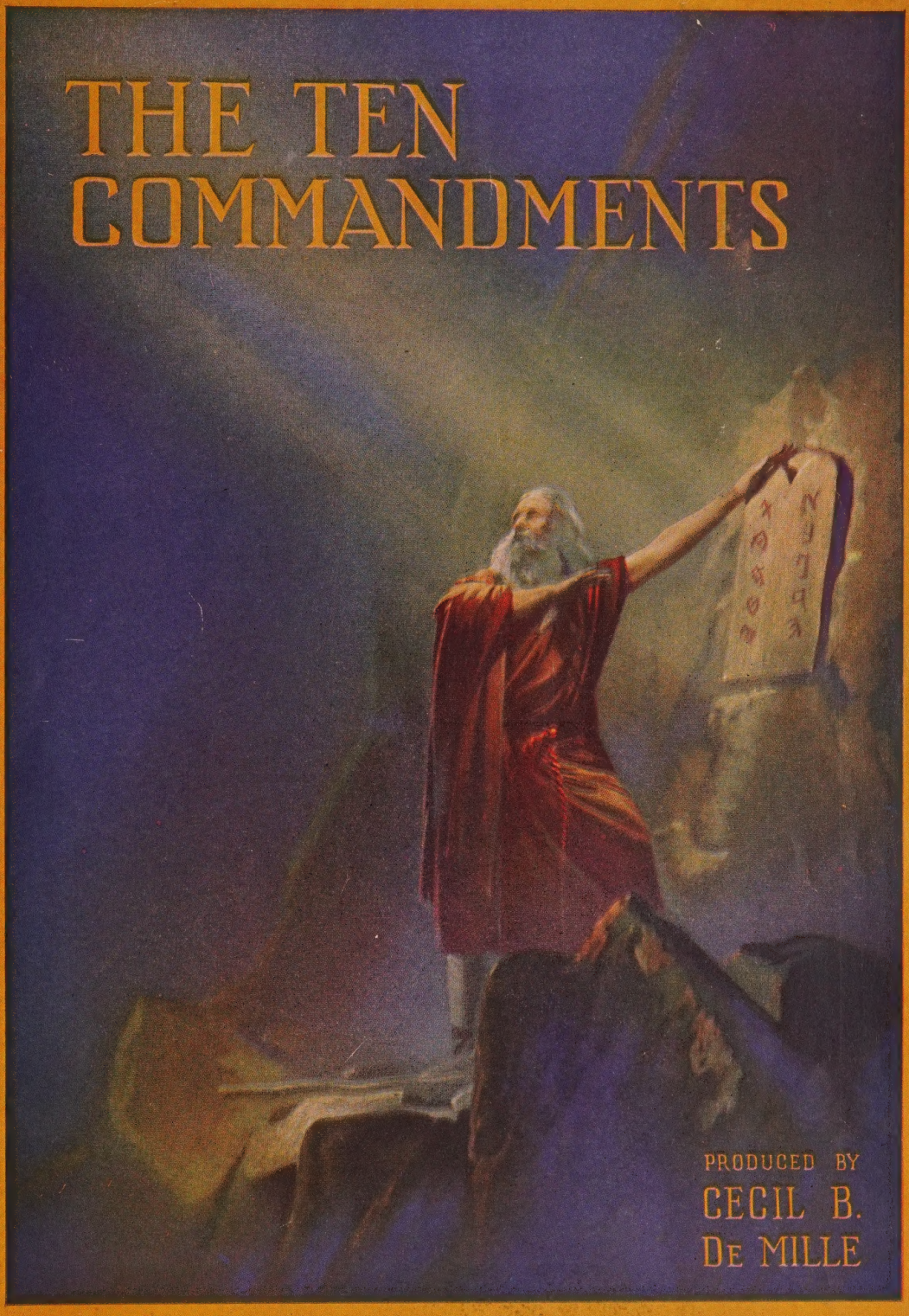
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS



PRODUCED BY
CECIL B.
DE MILLE

PRICE 25 CENTS

CECIL B. DeMILLE

FOREWORD

Our Modern World defined God as a "religious complex" and laughed at the Ten Commandments as OLD FASHIONED.

Then, through the laughter, came the shattering thunder of the World War. And now a blood-drenched, bitter world—no longer laughing—cries for a way out.

There is but one way out.

It existed before it was engraven upon Tablets of Stone. It will exist when stone has crumbled.

The Ten Commandments are not rules to obey as a personal favor to God.

They are the fundamental principles without which mankind cannot live together. They are not laws—they are the LAW.

The Production entitled *The Ten Commandments* is a PARAMOUNT picture and was produced by CECIL B. DE MILLE *from* a story by JEANIE MACPHERSON

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THE PLAYERS

CAST OF PART ONE

MOSES, the Lawgiver.....THEODORE ROBERTS
RAMESES, the Magnificent.CHARLES DE ROCHE
MIRIAM, the Sister of Moses.ESTELLE TAYLOR
THE WIFE OF PHARAOH.....JULIA FAYE
THE SON OF PHARAOH.TERRENCE MOORE
AARON, Brother of Moses.....JAMES NEILL
DATHAN, the Discontented....LAWSON BUTT
THE TASKMASTER.....CLARENCE BURTON
THE BRONZE MAN.....NOBLE JOHNSON

CAST OF PART TWO

MRS. MARTHA McTAVISH EDYTHE CHAPMAN
JOHN McTAVISH, her Son....RICHARD DIX
DAN McTAVISH, her Son....ROD LA ROQUE
MARY LEIGH.....LEATRICE JOY
SALLY LUNG, an Eurasian.....NITA NALDI
REDDING, an Inspector.....ROBERT EDESON
THE DOCTOR.....CHARLES OGLE
THE OUTCAST.....AGNES AYRES

PAUL IRIBE, *Art Director;* BERT GLENNON, PEVERELL MARLEY, ARCHIBALD STOUT, J. F. WESTERBERG, *Photographers;* ROY J. POMEROY, *Technical Director;* ANNE BAUCHENS, *Cutter;* CULLEN TATE, *Assistant Director.*

The Ten Commandments

Produced by CECIL B. DE MILLE

A PARAMOUNT PICTURE

Presented by ADOLPH ZUKOR *and* JESSE L. LASKY

The Story by JEANIE MACPHERSON

EGYPT. The days of the glory of the Pharaohs. Such majesty and power and corrosive magnificence as exist only in those periods of history when one small class lives upon and is heedless of the blood and tears of tens of thousands of people held in subjection.

The Children of Israel in bondage. Bereft of hope they toil in the desert, building walls and temples and pyramids. Faithful to their God despite the vindictive oppression of a ruler and a people who worship graven images, they finally see hope when Moses is raised up to plead for their liberation from slavery.

An old man in flowing robes gains audience with Rameses, but his pleas for justice do not avail, and as a last resort he pronounces the seventh curse—the curse of the death of the first-born. The old man is Moses, but his curse provokes only laughter, and Pharaoh's young son lashes the prophet from the steps of the throne.

Is not Pharaoh's son himself of the race of gods?

Are not his golden sandals beaten from the crowns of conquered kings?

But in the night the angels of the Most High visit the tenth plague upon Egypt, and when, the next morning, Pharaoh holds his first-born dead in his arms, and hears the wailing of the mothers and fathers of his land, he orders the liberation of the Jews.

Moses leads the Children of Israel forth from the gates of the city of their captivity. By the thousands they stream forth—men and women and children. Most of them are afoot, but here and there one rides an ass or a camel, and some of the aged and infirm are in litters. With them they take their goods and chattels, their cattle and their sheep and their goats. They are a liberated people on the march—a nation exalted with hope of the Promised Land and with the knowledge that the word of their prophets has come true.

Then Pharaoh suffers a change of heart, and orders his war chariots to start in pursuit of the Jews. The Children of Israel are at the Red Sea and those who are wavering in their faith revile Moses, the leader. Death or captivity seem inevitable, but Moses prays, and then the Lord sends a pillar of fire to stop the charge of the Egyptians and at the same time divides the waters of the sea so that His Chosen People pass in safety and dry-shod to the other shore.

The war chariots start in pursuit, but the waters close over their heads.

The exaltation of the prophet soon passes, for he finds that during his absence his people have set up a golden calf and worshiped it. Even his sister, Miriam, has been guilty of abominations. Then Moses, the lawgiver, descends from the mountain and crashes his tablets of stone into the scene of idolatrous worship and licentious revelry. The golden calf is destroyed and turned to dust.

As the dust settles figures emerge slowly from a misty background. Departed is the picturesque splendor of the days when history was written in stone; vanished the majesty of the background of Sinai and the lightning which was the sign of the wrath of God.

A primly dressed mother sits at a table in a modern room. She is reading from the Bible to her two sons. It is San Francisco; the time is today or a just-passed yesterday.

One son, Dan, is bored and cynical. The other son, John, is tolerant and more than half impressed; at any rate, he is deferential to his mother.

"That's bunk," says Dan. He intimates that the Ten Commandments may have been all right for the dead ones, but that the world has changed. The deeply religious mother, a Scotch-American woman who believes in the letter and fails to catch the spirit of religion, is affronted. Hugging her Bible to her flat breast, she turns her son out of her home because he says he does not believe in God. Dan apologizes to his mother, but refuses to apologize to God because he does not believe in God.

The mother is relentless. She is warned by her good son that she is using the cross for a scourge, but will not relent. Later she does let Dan return, but the next Sunday she starts to leave home, Bible under her arm, because this sceptical son and his sweetheart are dancing on the Lord's Day.

The upshot of it is that Dan and Mary, both unbelievers, leave the house. They will defy the Commandments together, they say, and Dan's parting taunt to John is to the effect that he, Dan, will break the laws of Moses and wax rich and have the world at his feet, whereas the stay-at-home boy, if he lives up to the Ten Commandments will finish just where he began—as a carpenter.

Now it so happens that the good son also loves Mary, and in bitterness of spirit he says: "I guess that's all I'm fit for—to be a carpenter."

His mother, her Bible in her arms, overhears his words and replies: "Many fine men have been carpenters, John."

After the intermission, the film takes up the lives of these four people three years later. Climaxes of thrilling power are reached, and in the end the Eternal Law is vindicated.

IN THE BIBLE SCENES

IN THE MAIN STORY

"The Ten Commandments" is *Your* Idea

THE ideas for the great masterpieces of the world have always originated in the hearts of the people. The artist is merely an interpreter. "The Ten Commandments" is *your* idea.

Cecil B. De Mille had long felt that there was a craving among the masses of people for something more vital, something more soul-satisfying on the screen than was being provided by the professional story-writers. He sensed that people's thoughts and longings went much deeper than the thoughts and longings expressed in the average photoplay. He wanted to make a great epic picture that would portray and satisfy these deeper cravings of mankind.

To discover an idea big enough around which to build this great epic picture, he realized he must go to the people themselves.

In October, 1922, Mr. De Mille announced a nation-wide Idea Contest. Prizes ranging from $1,000 to $50 were offered for the best ideas for motion pictures. Complete plots or scenarios were not wanted—merely ideas expressed in from one to three hundred words. Everybody was eligible to compete.

Within a month 30,000 ideas poured in to Mr. De Mille from every state in the Union and many foreign countries, from scrubwomen and society belles, cowboys and college professors. Most of them struck a note of surprising seriousness.

Eight people suggested a theme of universal appeal and bewildering possibilities—The Ten Commandments. Without hesitation this was given the first prize —$1,000 to each of the eight winners. Here they are:

F. C. Nelson, *Manufacturer,* Lansing, Mich.
Miss Marie Michale, *College student,* Providence, R. I.
Mrs. Peter Rasmussen, *Housewife,* Long Beach, Cal.
H. J. Bradt, *Retired,* Jackson, Mich.
Col. F. E. Lynch, *Geologist,* Los Angeles, Cal.
Mrs. Emily Hulse, *Housewife,* New York City
E. H. Peck, *Cashier,* Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mrs. Ottilie Beckett, *Housewife,* Los Angeles, Cal.

Second, third, and fourth prizes were awarded for excellent ideas which will be used in later productions.

The contest revealed startlingly that Mr. De Mille was right, that the clean, sober minds of the vast majority of people are not interested in froth but in the virile, vital things of life, the epic ideas of all times.

And the greatest of all photoplay ideas is undoubtedly the divine and immutable code of laws upon which human conduct and hopes and faith have been founded —The Ten Commandments.

The idea sprang from the hearts of the people. It is *your* idea.

Facts About the Making of this Colossal Work

AFTER eight months of preparation production was started in desert locales closely duplicating Israel's exodus from Egypt and stay in the Sinaitic Wilderness. More than 2,500 people were used in the Biblical scenes of the story. Means were found to represent Israel's dryshod passage of the Red Sea and the engulfing of the hosts of Pharaoh.

JEANIE MACPHERSON
Who wrote the story following the prize competition

Among the engineering works accomplished were the Israelitish slave-built City of Raamses with twenty-four sphinxes and four colossi, also alongside it a modern Tent City with every public utility convenience to accommodate the working throngs; the conversion of the asphaltic bed of the Mojave dry lake into a racing ground for Pharaoh's chariots; the construction of the Sinaitic canyon where Moses read the tablets of the Law and where subsequently three thousand idolaters were consumed by Heaven's wrath for the worship of the Golden Calf.

On the next page will be found some account of the lost arts of Egypt, the effects of which Mr. De Mille was enabled by the labors of Egyptologists to reproduce. Before the play opened in New York, an extremely interesting exhibition of the actual costume designs, models and ornaments was held at the Hotel Astor. It was attended by hundreds of couturiers, fashion designers, artists, illustrators and others professionally interested, as well as by the merely curious. In the wardrobe department of the production which these master models served, nearly 85,000 yards of cloth were made up into the clothing of the armies of people.

In the modern story advantage was taken of a great contemporary work of Cathedral building, the erection of the new and stately Sts. Peter's and Paul's in the city of San Francisco. Many of the scenes were filmed atop the nave or high in the spirework of the rising Cathedral, with the Golden Gate and the Bay as the backgrounds. Marines of wild storm and havoc were secured on the ocean. Even Chinatown yielded new secrets for the Foreign Quarter episodes of the story.

Lost Arts of Egypt

MANY of the beautiful arts of Egypt became lost in the breakup of the world's oldest civilization nor has any modern been able to reconstitute their technique. The picture of ancient Egypt given in the Biblical part of Cecil B. De Mille's production, "The Ten Commandments," is said to afford the most intimate view yet presented of this nation of artists. Neither the examination of Museum collections, nor even personal visits to the Tombs like Tut-ankh-amen's, can reproduce historical reality to compare with the screen. Mr. De Mille was aided in his task by scholars of repute who saw to it that the reconstruction was accurate.

In size the greatest architectures along the banks of the Nile surpass the dimensions of mediaeval cathedral or twentieth century skyscraper, and yet the former were built more than 3000 years ago without the aid of modern inventions. The Great Pyramid covers thirteen acres, stands 464 feet high, and the roofing of its central chamber consists of 56 granite blocks each of 54 tons weight. One gets some idea of the incredible amount of manual labor involved when in the De Mille picture he sees several hundred Israelites dragging with ropes a single stone Sphinx into position.

Not only in size but likewise in proportions and refinement were all other monuments surpassed. The laws of perspective, asymmetry, harmony and composition were thoroughly understood. On Egyptian measurements Mr. De Mille modeled his reproduction of the City of Raamses which Scripture tells us was built by Israelite forced labor under Pharaoh's taskmasters. The main construction of the City gate and side walls is 750 feet in length and 109 feet high. Four huge colossi of the Pharaohs guard the approach which is led up to by an avenue of twenty-four Sphinxes.

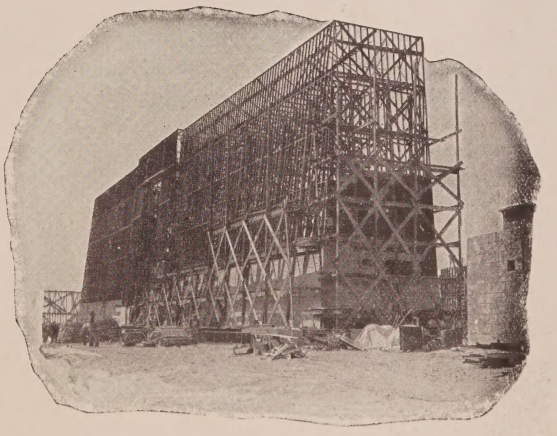
As is well known, the fine arts of porcelain pottery, glazing, veneer, inlay and gem work generally were lost to Europe for a thousand years till the Renaissance revived them by new technique or by discipleship in the arts of the Far East. Three thousand years before that, Egypt boasted of the most cunning artificers. Their productions equal or surpass those of modern Europe, China, Japan and India. One can have little notion of their real magnificence till he has seen the bejeweled Rameses II and the members of his Court in "The Ten Commandments" epic. Masculine jewelry is today associated with effeminacy whereas the heroic proportions of the Pharaoh played by De Roche seem to become more virile by the scintillating wealth of sceptre, diadem, neckpiece, scarab, stomacher, armlets, signet rings, jeweled sandals, and greaves.

The profuse use of ornaments by all the higher ranks is shown. To satisfy the demand many thousands of artists were busied, and besides the real stones and precious metals which were carved into myriad shapes of beauty, the glass smiths made doublets of gems not inferior to the synthetic pearls, rubies and emeralds of today.

The early Egyptians had bath establishments, safety razors, cosmetics, wig shops and beauty parlors. They enjoyed chariot races, prize fights, tenpins, acrobatics, vaudeville and concerts. They made exquisite linens and cottons, wove rugs and carpets, perfected culinary art, and invented graceful furniture. 'Twould be hard to mention a convenience of modern living that they lacked, outside of the devices based on steam coal, fuel oil and electricity. Instead of gas or electric, they apparently had a strange kind of light that revealed interior decoration and objects in daylight colors. Apparently also they antedated the invention of gunpowder by using a secret explosive to rive the fifty and hundred-ton blocks of solid stone that are among the marvels of their architecture. The more deeply the subject is delved into, the more it is discovered the Egyptians were three or four thousand years ahead of their time in subduing Nature to the manifold uses of art.

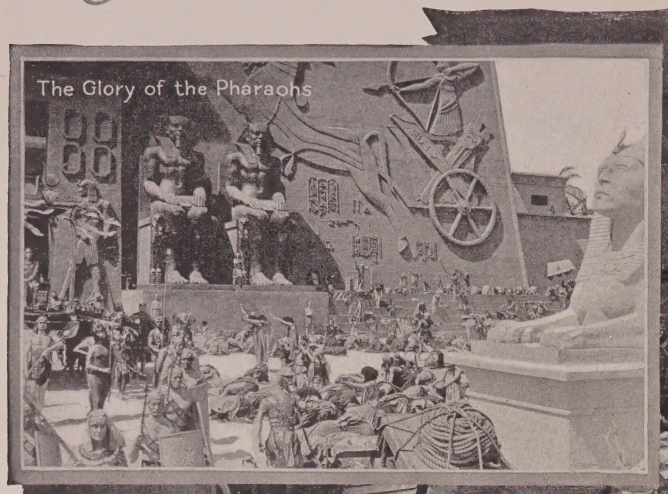
This wonderful triumph was marred by the flaw of exploiting subject nationalities and ultimately the whole population to the glory of the Pharaoh and to the senseless idea of his supposed immortality within the pyramid tomb receiving his remains.

The revolt of the Israelites from such forced labor marks the first step in the progress of the latter nation out of Egyptian bondage to the "land of milk and honey" destined for them by Jehovah. It is thus the starting point of the story of the Law, i. e., the Ten Commandments, laid down to Moses on Mount Sinai. In the Biblical part of his epic, Cecil De Mille has filmed nearly all the salient events of the Book of Exodus, and in doing so has reproduced the Egypt of Mosaic times in a truly marvelous manner.



"City of Raamses"
Part of the framework of the largest outdoor scenic "set" ever made for a picture

THE BIRTH OF A GREAT NATION


The Glory of the Pharaohs

Israelite Slaves

Moses approaches the Ruler of Egypt

Announcing the Seventh Plague

Exodus of Israel to the Red Sea

Pharaoh's Chariots Pursue

The Sea rolls back, engulfing Pharaoh's hosts

The Lawgiver engraves the Commandments

THE FOUNDING OF ALL LAWS

Toiling, and dying, as they drag vast monuments
Miriam, the burden bearer
Driven from Court
"God has taken thy First Born, Let my people go!"
Moses points the way through the parted waters
Deliverance
Offering up their jewels to Miriam
The Making of the Golden Calf

More Facts About the Making of The Ten Commandments

Main outdoor set of Raamses: 109 feet high, 750 feet long.

Materials actually used: 15 tons modeling clay, 300 tons plaster, 550,000 feet lumber, 25,000 pounds nails, 75 miles cable and wire.

Weight of Sphinxes, nearly four tons each. Height of Pharaoh's stone colossi, thirty-five feet.

Equipment of Camp Cecil B. De Mille: Water pumping and tank system, 36,000-gallon daily capacity; electricity, daily consumption 1000 kilowatts; two dining halls, 1,000 sittings each; 2,500 sleeping cots and bedding; daily commissary, five meat animals and three and a half tons of other food; fleet of motor cars and sand sleds, 47; miles of sidewalks, 5; mechanics on salary roll, 850; cooks and assistants, 125; police, firemen and soldiers, 250.

Costumes, harness, etc.: 16 miles of cloth, made up into over 3,000 costumes. Three tons of leather, made up into 250 sets of Egyptian chariot harness. Two tons of talcum powder to whiten actors' faces, 500 gallons of glycerine to grease their bodies, 200 pounds of safety pins to pin up the drapes.

Animals: 900 horses, 200 burros, 50 camels, 1,000 cattle, 500 sheep and goats, 300 fowl, guinea hens and ducks, 50 dogs. In addition to grain ration, 10 tons of hay a day required.

Nationalities of the players: Egyptian, Coptic, Arabian, Palestinian, Syrian, Armenian, Mesopotamian, Turkish, Caucasian, Russian, Roumanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Czecho-Slovakian, Zingari, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Moorish, Polish, Swiss, German, Austrian, Hungarian, Scandinavian, Dutch, Belgic, British and American.

Camp Synagogue, presided over by Rabbi Aaron Markadov, assisted by an interpreter. Camp school, 7 teachers and 60 registered children under the age of fourteen. Camp Orchestra, Miss Ruth Dickey, conductor, and ten musicians.

Roster of principals and extras, 2,500, including 250 Old World Israelites. Roster of technical and mechanical workers 850, including architects, artists, hydraulic engineers, army men, doctors, police, firemen, chefs, stenographers, dressmakers, linemen, electricians, carpenters, masons, plasterers, iron-workers, plumbers, harness-makers, tent-makers, blacksmiths, wagon-makers, drivers, chauffeurs, camel-drivers, cowmen, poulterers, ostlers, shepherds.

MUSIC IN THE DESERT

OUT in the desert where (the poets say) Bulbul the nightingale alone breaks the stillness by his song, melody old and new helped Cecil B. De Mille and his co-workers in the Egypt and Wilderness scenes of "The Ten Commandments."

The location chosen among the Guadaloupe sand dunes on the California coast, 200 miles from Los Angeles, was among the most desolate imaginable. There was necessarily much hardship or discomfort, though the Famous Players-Lasky had equipped a complete Tent City for the players, adjacent to the movie "City of Raamses."

At best it would have been very slow, discouraging work but for the "morale-maker." Ruth Dickey bore this title, and justified it by her conducting of a Camp De Mille orchestra. She led ten professional musicians who played all day during the scenes and at night provided dance music in the recreation tent. A location party has to have music just as an army does, and the three thousand people employed were greatly cheered and quickened.

Miss Dickey, who is a sister of Paul Dickey the playwright, was not the only morale-maker, however. The two hundred and fifty orthodox Jews from the Orient who took part in the spectacle, were moved by the enacting of their ancestral history to sing the ancient chants and psalms of Israel. The beautiful music of the Hebrew temples was heard over the desert spaces, and tears mingled with joy in the thanksgiving of the Egyptian deliverance.

The song of Bulbul was lost in the shouts of Zion.

Filming Modern Life *in* A Great City

POWERFUL in simplicity, Mr. De Mille set his modern scene for one group of intensely vital characters. Gone are the thunders and lightnings of Sinai—the lapse to idolatry and its dire punishment—the divine re-birth of a Nation, and the Ordinance of its keeping. Once thundered and lightened from Sinai, the Commandments are now within the covers of a Book. What say they to modern life? What have these five people to do with them? That is the theme.

Yet the magnitude of this main story is twice the magnitude of rich and colorful Egyptian spectacle, dimensionally and every other way. The authors chose mighty San Francisco as the background. Here the fierce life pulsation makes or breaks heroes or victims. Rising phoenix-like from its ashes, the Queen City of the western sea has greatly enriched or beggared by its upbuilding. On a tall church spire two hundred feet above a teeming city square, Mr. De Mille and his co-workers filmed some of the most thrilling moments of the drama.

Mr. De Mille's story. A touching figure is Mary Leigh, a hand-to-mouth waif (her only friend her little terrier) who steals when she is hungry. Brought into the home circle, her tendrils of love twine round the hearts of the two brothers Dan and John.

The Bible-reverencing Mother is opposed by the reckless Dan whose god is Mammon. Mary prefers him to John, and he marries her. It is a way of escape to them both from the narrow Covenanter faith of a household where the Holy Book is the literal rule of conduct and life is burdened by supplications and Scripture. But John sticks to the maternal hearth.

The opportunity came through the construction during the summer of 1923 of the new Sts. Peter's & Paul's cathedral-like edifice. This is the church that (in the play) Dan McTavish contracts to build. The plot as relates to Sts. Peter's & Paul's is purely imaginary, but strikingly typifies the results of flouting the Divine as well as man-made Law.

San Francisco is likewise the meeting ground of the East and the West. Its wharves are redolent of the Orient, its Foreign Quarters crowded with the confusion of races. The exotic ripens, deadly and beautiful. Here Sally Lung, half French, half Chinese, with a hidden sinister trail from Calcutta past Molokai to the Golden Gate, plays her peculiar role in the life of the Caucasian.

The quaint virtues of the cottager's domestic hearth are the starting point of

We see "big graft" in operation some three years later when slick Dan McTavish, availing himself of all the city's chances, has become a rising young contractor, allied with a smart politician of the Abe Ruef type, named Redding. This Redding is the city's chief building inspector. For part of the "divvy" he winks at scamped jobs and puts favored contractors in the way of getting rich. The two men plan a clean-up on a large Church contract by putting up the structure with skimped concrete: one part of cement to twelve parts of sand. As a blind to their schemes, Honest John is engaged as the carpentry foreman.

Dan no longer cares for Mary, his wife. He is mad for riches and pleasure. Sally Lung, who has been smuggled into America, in one of his great jute bales from the East, takes his fancy. A small fortune out of his crooked gains goes into a rope of pearls around Sally's comely neck and a gorgeous apartment to house her exotic loveliness.

Mary flees to John atop the Church tower. High up there she loses her footing, is saved from headlong death by his quick arms. Examining the crumbled footing, he realizes in a flash the nature of the concrete and tells her to fetch her husband.

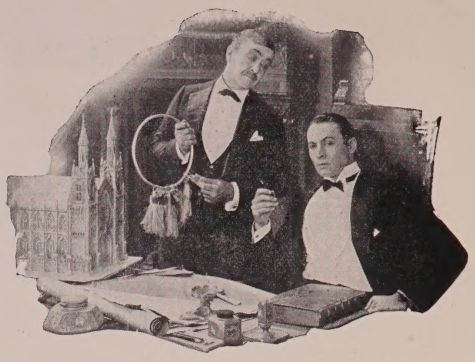
Events move with great rapidity. Dan is obliged, by the wife's urgent interruption, to leave the love-potioning Sally and go to the scene. Even so, while Dan and John are arguing, a terrible crash is heard. The whole apse wall has tumbled down, and buried in its ruins the little Mother who had strayed into the Church to touch with reverent hands her son's Tablets of the Law.

The ensuing scene stamps Cecil De Mille as a master of the human heart, gifted with insight into immortal love that touches the Divine. The talk twixt the dying Mother and her erring son is indescribably beautiful. Behind the choking tears comes the realization that we who err are the fulfillers of our own wrong-doing. One cannot blot the past nor escape the sequel.

Mary is still Dan's, though every fibre of her inmost being calls out for John. Dan faces bankruptcy and perhaps State prison. To avert exposure by *The Stingaree,* a blackmailing weekly, he must get funds and asks Sally to disgorge.

The Chinese empties her pretty money bag. Dollar bills — one . . three . . five — flutter to the floor. Nothing! Dan is after the $30,000 rope of pearls, and despite her struggles tears it from her neck. Then Sally points to a sensational article in the day's paper stating that U. S. agents are on the trail of a beautiful Eurasian who got into the country from Molokai Island. She is that outcast. Like a flash Dan realizes that she has branded him forever! In a fury he whips out his revolver and breaks the awful commandment, THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

Two further scenes in the life of the stricken man impress the eye and brain like etchings of fire. In his wife's bedchamber Dan tells Mary of his evil case. Recoiling with horror she snatches up a weapon and cries desperately: "If you touch me, I'll kill you!" The officers come to arrest him. Then Mary, downing her fear, makes the supreme sacrifice. She pulls the distracted Dan under the clothes and hides him with her body. The officers put off by a ruse, he is enabled to attempt escape to Mexico.



The other scene shows a wild sea beating against a rock-bound coast. Dan's motorboat, no longer answering the helm, is driven upon the cliffs. Man and craft are dashed against its beetling twin face, the outlines of which are Nature's rude sculpture of the Tablets of the Commandments. Only Dan's dead form lying at the foot of the great cliff, one arm flung over a splintered piece of the boat bearing its name DEFIANCE — only this remains of the once insouciant spirit that defied the decrees of God and man.

* * *

And what of Mary?

She tried to kill herself but was saved by John. . . .

He drew her into his carpenter shop and she showed him her hands which she believed already whitened with leprosy. John took down the Good Book. He began to read to her of Christ healing the lepers though with averted face and eyes she cried "Unclean! unclean!"

But she could see (as John read) the Sick Girl coming to Jesus and saying: "Master, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean!" and the Saviour's glad healing effected in the words, "I will, be thou made clean!" At the end of the narrative Mary looked at her hands. She could not find a blemish. Showing them against the rising sun, she said:

"Look, John! In the light, it's gone!"

And John answered, smiling with strange radiance: "Yes, Mary—in the LIGHT—it's gone!" . . . And for the first time their eyes met in perfect understanding.

How the Story Was Evolved

By Jeanie Macpherson

THE question has been asked of me: "How did you evolve a modern story from the suggestion that Mr. De Mille make a film presentation of the Ten Commandments?"

It came out of life, but it came slowly. It was months after the close of Mr. De Mille's nationwide idea contest before scattered situations shaped themselves into the mosaic of a complete, coherent story.

My first thought was to interpret the Commandments in episodic form. We would have illustrated the Commandments one at a time, or perhaps in pairs.

I worked for several weeks along these lines with growing dissatisfaction. Something was wrong. In episodic form the story didn't have the right "feel." It was bumpy. It started and stopped, ran and limped. The thread or theme of it seemed subtly broken every time we commenced a new episode.

It became evident that the usual failure of episodic drama would be the fate of "The Ten Commandments" unless we changed our plan. So reconstructing my entire concept of the story, I threw out everything I had done and started in all over again. A straight story in which all ten of the Commandments were broken began to assume colossal difficulties to me. I went far afield in my hunt for plot and situation, with increasingly unreal and artificial result. Then one evening I turned about entirely and began to drop plot and just think about life itself and the people's lives I had heard about and known of. And the outstanding thing that hit me was how easily and frequently human beings break all ten of the Commandments.

I saw at once that there wasn't the slightest necessity to strain or resort to a forced, artificial, literary form in order to create a story based on the breaking of the Commandments. The difficulty for all of us lay in not breaking them. Breaches of the various Commandments form naturally the most dramatic incidents in life. Few of us go through our allotted span without collisions with one or more harum-scarum, reckless individuals who break all of them without being either vicious or degenerate.

A race is always dramatic. And the two brothers, with whom I had started the story, now swam out of my mental haze and assumed form. One brother for and one scoffing at The Ten Commandments. These two brothers are merely symbols of the eternal faith and disbelief of humankind. Finishing with them I asked myself what the mother of two such boys might be like—and an old lady I had known all my life came to mind. A thoroughly good and honest woman, who believed everybody should believe as she did, or else they were all wrong. A woman who kept the Ten Commandments, it is true, but who kept them the wrong way. A woman who was so busy interpreting the letter of the Bible she had forgotten its spirit.

And so, in "The Ten Commandments" it is this woman's stern and unreasonable attitude of "hammering" religion home, which causes one of her sons to swing off to the other extreme, an atheistic tangent. This is a logical reaction from what the boy calls his mother's eternally "harping on one string."

Both this brother, who doesn't believe in God, and the other, who sticks to his code and faith through thick and thin, together with Mrs. McTavish, their stern but honest Scotch mother, were based on individuals I had known in life. In fact the prototype of Mrs. McTavish was a personal friend of my childhood.

The love motive now comes into the story in the shape of a modern girl who doesn't know what the Ten Commandments are all about. She neither believes nor

disbelieves them; she is just ignorant of their meaning and considers Elinor Glyn a great deal more interesting.

Here we had two absorbing and dramatic problems, the answering of which would go far to put muscle, sinew, heart and lungs on and in the bare skeleton of our story.

By the time these four totally dissimilar people, all represented by individuals I had met, or known of, at various times, came slowly into distinct mental focus, I realized that drama must come inevitably from the weaving of their actions and reactions upon each other; and the first solution of my problem had been found, i. e., the translating of The Ten Commandments into terms of modern, every day life, with modern, every day people.

But the story needed a "high light." We had said in our theme that the Ten Commandments were and are irresistible, unchangeable, but we needed still more emphasis. "Seeing is believing," and we believed the spectator would be much more impressed with a story based on the Ten Commandments if he first had seen the history of them, how they were given and what effect they had upon the people who had come in contact with them during that faraway time of the birth of the Decalogue, than as if this spectator had merely a vague memory from far off Sunday school days that somewhere at some time the Ten Commandments had been given to somebody.

So it is as a prologue to our modern story that I adapted for the screen much of the Book of Exodus. Three thousand years separated the prologue and the modern plot, yet the central thought of both is unchanged without age and as applicable to-day as then. As the sins of Pharaoh and his horde of horsemen are avenged by the down crashing waves of the Red Sea which parted to let the Children of Israel with their clear faith pass through, so does an emotional Red Sea engulf our modern Dan McTavish who has attempted to raise his puny voice against immutable laws. As Moses visited the wrath of God upon the thousands of Israelites engaged in false worship of the calf of gold, so do we find punishment inevitably visited upon those who presume to set up substitute idols of wealth, money or power in this modern day and age. Unlike his brother Dan, the clear faith of John McTavish brings him safely through this emotional Red Sea.

There was nothing of spontaneous generation in building the story of "The Ten Commandments." Slowly but surely the required elements came out of life and human experience, leading logically from one into another. And as the mosaic formed it grew more simple, because it dealt with fundamentals. The artificialities of the "smart" modern tale fell free automatically as we tested them in the acid test of our mercilessly real theme. Here at last was a theme grounded on the rock bottom of a great truth—namely, that if you break the ten immutable laws they will break you! A theme free from the too common pitfalls of artificiality which often trap the unwary feet of those who attempt to follow the intricate winding paths of a complicated civilization.

"The Ten Commandments" is not a preachment. It is entertaining drama placed on the screen by a master of dramatic technique. But while it entertains it brings visions. It stirs memories. As William Wordsworth says, the memories—

"Of dim, far off, forgotten things—
And battles long ago."

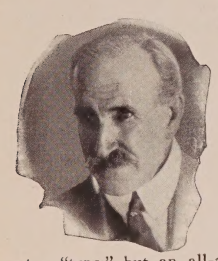
But also it reaches down into our everyday thoughts, experiences and feelings and drags them mercilessly into the light. A gigantic undertaking, surely, and one which necessitated a rare combination — art and bravery.

That Mr. De Mille had this combination gloriously, "The Ten Commandments" attests.

PERSONALITIES

"THE TEN COMMANDMENTS" is CECIL B. DE MILLE'S fiftieth production for Paramount. He was born in Massachusetts forty-three years ago, the son of Henry C. De Mille, the eminent author of *"The Charity Ball," "The Lost Paradise"* and *"The Wife."* His mother directed a successful play agency for many years. After college, war service against Spain, and acting apprenticeship, the younger De Mille became a leading man and stage producer. At the invitation of Jesse L. Lasky he went to Hollywood in 1912 to enter the then virgin field of motion picture feature production. His first two works were adaptations of *"The Squaw Man"* and *"The Call of the North."* They were made in a horse barn temporarily converted into a place of picture filming. Both proved highly popular, and Mr. De Mille embarked on his long career as director-general of the Lasky West Coast studios, a connection which has recently been renewed by a long-term contract. The son of the famous playwright is today a leading figure in the life of southern California. Among his distinctive achievements are putting the drama into pictures, Rembrandt lighting, realism in settings, novel color work and close-ups, and the development of the American art of pantomime, which in his hands has surpassed both the Italian and the French.

JEANIE MACPHERSON, author of the story, is a direct descendant of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the royal Stuart heir of the Highland rising of 1745. Commingling strong ancestral strains of Scottish and Gallic blood, she first saw the light in Boston and was educated in a Paris convent. After a number of years on the stage, she joined Griffith at the old Union Square biograph and had a wide experience. She was an early comer to Hollywood, the Western movie eldorado, where as a member of several organizations she wrote her own stellar vehicles and developed literary ability. She then achieved a place with De Mille and abandoning the acting field, devoted herself to scenarios. All but three of the celebrated Director's stories have been adapted or originated by her. She is probably the most practiced and able "continuity" technician in the world, and certainly one of the "Big Three" of the women writers for the screen. She has invented the short cut in movie expression, saving the spectator boresome details and long titles by lightning-like visualization of meanings. With this happy facility are united psychological insight of a rare order and an inexorable logic of events. Add daring imagination, humor, pity and sympathy, and you have some of the reasons why Jeanie Macpherson is in the top rank.

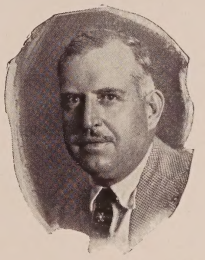


THEODORE ROBERTS started life as a 'Frisco sea captain. He is indeed a rugged oak, and no one would suspect his ownership of over three score years. Going on the stage at the beginning of the eighties, he became America's foremost character actor and his work in *"Arizona," "The Barrier,"* and many other old-time plays is recalled with delight. He is also the veteran actor of the Lasky Studio where he went to take a life-time position with the "stock" back in 1914. Mr. Roberts links the old with the new as no other player on the stage. He is not a "type," but an all-around player. Associated with the giants of the "palmy days," he maintains the traditions of majesty, authority and expressiveness that assay so potently in the delineation of Moses the Lawgiver.

CHARLES DE ROCHE is in private life Count Charles de Rochefort, scion of the marquises of that ilk in the Pyrennees. His mother is a Bonaparte on the maternal side. By Fate's strange whimsy, a real nobleman is thus transmogrified into the royal Pharaoh of *"The Ten Commandments!"* . . . De Roche as a lad ran away to be an actor. Not all the allurements of his father (who was president of the French Transatlantic Line) could induce him to forsake Thespis. He acted in Paris and the French provinces for years, worked also in pictures, and then during the War entered as a poilu and rose to a commission by aiding in the defence of Verdun. After the end of the strife he made a big hit for Gallot Films as a daredevil stunt actor. There he attracted American attention and was brought over here for Paramounts, attaining the kingly role in the Cecil De Mille production following successes in *"The Spanish Jade"* and *"The Cheat."*

"She is indeed Miriam!" The delighted exclamation came in Jewish from a group of a hundred Palestine women who had been specially engaged as extras in the Exodus scenes of *"The Ten Commandments."* ESTELLE TAYLOR, to their minds, exactly fulfilled the Israelite ideal of the passionate sister of Moses. Miss Taylor is an olive brunette, of indisputably Anglo-American ancestry. She was born in Wilmington, Del., and educated for the stage at the Academy of Dramatic Arts here. During her four years in drama and pictures, she has played with eclat such heavy "leads" as require beauty, presence and temperament. Among her previous successes have been *"Bavu," "A Fool There Was," "Monte Cristo"* and *"While New York Sleeps."*

JULIA FAYE (Wife of Pharaoh) comes from Richmond, Virginia, where she was born in 1898. Her parents moving West, she was educated in Virginia and at the University of Illinois. Instead of the life-work of school-teaching that had been mapped out for her, Miss Faye turned her thoughts to the screen. In 1915 on the Coast she secured a small part in Griffith's "Intolerance." She screened remarkably well, and later in Sennett comedies was a solace to tired business men's optics. Since 1917 she has played a wide variety of roles for the Paramount, where she is a member of the "stock." The millions of folks who enjoyed *"Old Wives for New," "Saturday Night," "Nice People," "Forbidden Fruit," "The Affairs of Anatol,"* etc., remember her work most pleasurably.



CLARENCE BURTON was born in Windsor, Missouri. He started in the theatrical profession at the old Burbank Theatre in Los Angeles. In his touring years he traveled the Eastern circuit, and played on the vaudeville stage for five seasons. He entered motion pictures a decade ago, as heavy man in one of the first big pictures ever made. Recently he has signed a contract to play a series of heavy and character roles for the Paramount, the direct result of his striking histrionic achievement as the brutalized Taskmaster in *"The Ten Commandments."*

LAWSON BUTT is a native of Jersey,—not New Jersey, but the Hesperian isle off the French coast famous for Harry Vardon, Lily Langtry and milch kine. He was educated at Clifton College, a British seminary for priests; but he found his truer calling as a Shakespearean player. This was first in association with F. R. Benson, and later—in America—with Robert Mantell, Margaret Anglin and Grace George. Among well-known modern plays in which he has appeared are *"The Garden of Allah," "The Lie," "The Earth"* and *"The Wanderer."* He has served the screen in a number of extremely popular productions, including *"The Miracle Man," "Earth-bound," "The Masquerader,"* and *"Desert Gold."* His lean, almost hawk-like personality fits in with the role of Dathan the Discontented.

JAMES NEILL—Aaron in the production—was born in Savannah, Ga., the son of an English sea captain who was a blockade runner for the Confederacy in the Civil War. After education in the South, he got his first lowly stage job in "hick" drama from A. D'Arcy, the man who wrote *"The Face on the Barroom Floor."* Mr. Neill suffered or enjoyed almost every sort of "palmy days" theatrical experience, including roughing it in the wild West when the audience was quite apt to vent its feelings in gun play. As he advanced in the profession, he appeared in support of such stars as Felix Morris, Mrs. Fiske, William H. Crane, William Gillette, then went on stellar tour himself in *"Mr. Barnes of New York."* After having led the Elitch Gardens (Denver) stock, he organized his own repertoire company and traveled at the head of it for many years. One of these continental and Pacific tours lasted for almost six years—the world's record of continuous acting. Mr. Neill has been a character man in pictures practically ever since he went to California in 1912. Cecil De Mille selected him for the role of the High Priest of Israel after he had interviewed nearly forty applicants for the part.

GINO CORRADO, the gallant Joshua of the production, was born in Florence, Italy, twenty-nine years ago. He was well educated in his native land and at St. Bede's College in this country. Entering theatricals first as a college amateur, he sought the movie stage and became a favorite in Christie comedies. For Paramount he has been playing a round of unusual characters—anything from a Siamese to an Apache or a "Mex" to a martial Hebrew—with a Latin versatility that suggests a Novelli or even a Fregoli. His real name is Gino Liserani. This was changed a while back for stage purposes to Eugene Corey, but De Mille has got him Italianate again as Corrado — the sly Proteus!

ROD LA ROCQUE—Dan McTavish in the production—was born in Chicago in 1898 and has been a player from childhood. The family name is La Rocque La Tour, tracing back to a mediaeval knightly line in central France. Like Captain Bluntschli in *"Arms and the Man,"* Roderick's father, Edouard Andre La Rocque, is a hotel manager and operates a string of foreign hotels in and around Chicago. The boy with decided precocity divided school time with vaudeville time; dipping into the legitimate at the grave age of seven: later organizing a singing "newsboys" quartet, essaying road musical comedy, and what not. While still a mere youth, he engaged with Essanay and became a "kid" leading man in pictures. Afterwards he was the "heavy" opposite Bryant Washburn in a long series of productions. He then sought New York, secured a footing in the drama, was with Alice Brady in *"Anna Ascends,"* played opposite Mary Nash in *"Thy Name Is Woman,"* and with Frances Larrimore in *"Nice People."* He went back and forth between plays and pictures, enlarging technique and enriching experience. Among the feminine stars of the films that he has aided by his clever "leads" are Billie Burke in *"Let's Get a Divorce;"* Mabel Normand, *"Venus Model"* and *"Perfect Thirty-Six;"* Mae Marsh, *"Hidden Fires"* and *"Money Mad;"* Madge Kennedy, *"A Perfect Lady;"* Mae Murray, *"Jazzmania"* and *"The French Doll."* Of late, resident in Hollywood, he has been a highly valued Paramount player. In the War he felt the atavistic urge of the La Tour swashbuckling strain, was turned down at first, but served in the 127th Infantry.

NITA NALDI is a New Yorker and a native of Queens Borough. She comes from one of the best families in Astoria. Three years ago Miss Naldi was an obscure "free lance" player in minor films, a novice recruit to the movies from the pulchritudinous ranks of a "girl show." She is an exotic type, brilliantly alluring. After *"Experience"* and *"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,"* her work as Dona Sol opposite Valentino in *"Blood and Sand"* gave her a tremendous reputation. 'Twould seem difficult to live up to such plaudits, but Nita Naldi did it in such subsequent productions as *"Glimpses of the Moon," "You Can't Fool Your Wife," "Lawful Larceny"* and *"Everyday Love."* For the last twelvemonth she has divided her time between the East and West Coast Paramount studios. Miss Naldi plays with equal facility Italianate, Spanish, French or Far Eastern sirens. Her almond-eyed half-Celestial, Sally Lung, in the main story of *"The Ten Commandments,"* is one of the happiest of her assumptions.

RICHARD DIX—John McTavish—is twenty-eight and was born in St. Paul, Minn., where he attended school and later put in a year at the university. Never a bookworm, he loved athletics and dramatics, and after trying business pursuits for a time, succeeded in entering theatrical "stock," first in the Twin Cities and later in Pittsburgh and Los Angeles. Between times he appeared in a number of New York legitimate productions. In 1921, following the suggestion given him years before by Jeanie Macpherson when he was a stock actor, he went into pictures. This proved his real metier, and he rapidly acquired the technique and became a screen favorite. Among his most popular appearances were in *"Dangerous Curves Ahead," "Racing Hearts,"* with Agnes Ayres; *"The Woman with Four Faces,"* and *"To the Last Man."* The last three were for Paramount, which has shown its estimate of his sterling qualities by placing him under a long-term contract. There is a sincerity and manliness in the work of Dix to which spectators always respond, and his striking popularity emphasizes the public reaction from the "he-doll" and "lounge lizard" types.

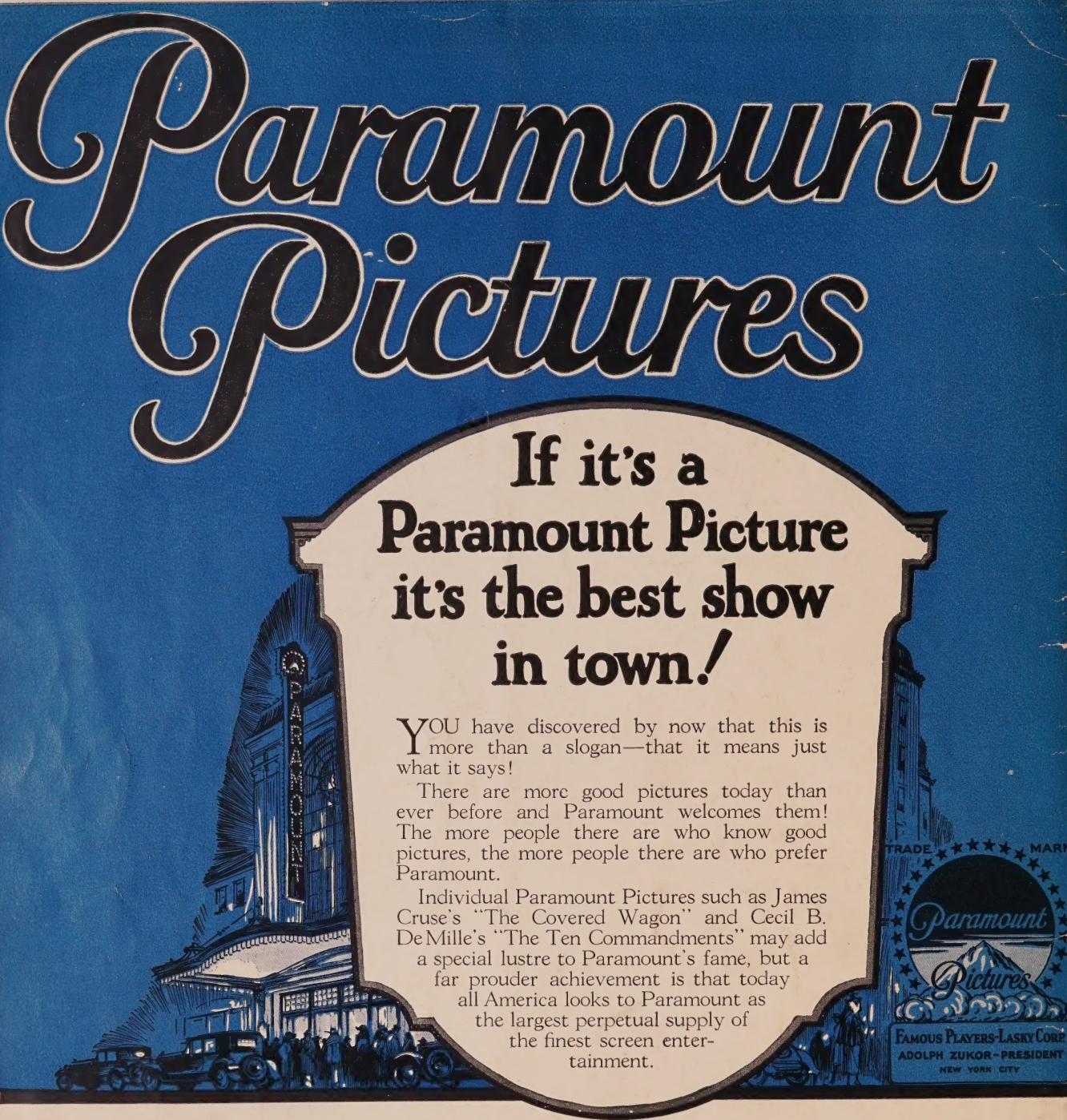
BEATRICE JOY, one of the most charming younger actresses of the screen, has reached the top rung of eminence in six years. In 1917, a little New Orleans miss of old-time Louisiana family, she answered the advertisement of a small local studio in that city and was brought out in her first picture. Her next job was in New York with one-reel Paramount comedies. Seeking Los Angeles, she found "stock" to her liking and appeared in such pictures as *"Bunty Pulls the Strings," "Ace of Hearts," "Poverty of Riches"* and *"Ladies Must Live."* This opened up a larger opportunity with Paramount feature productions, and with each picture her friendly clientele increased by leaps and bounds. George Melford's *"Java Head"* and Cecil De Mille's *"Manslaughter"* scored two of her personal triumphs. Of late seasons she has acted in De Mille productions almost exclusively. He calls her "Number One Million," i. e., the millionth girl of absolutely mobile face *who can express any character.* She is destined (he believes) to be the greatest of feminine players. Off stage she is full of fun, a veritable smiling Venus with black hair and sparkling brown eyes. Her role of Mary in *"The Ten Commandments"* brought opportunity to portray the soul of beautiful womanhood.

EDYTHE CHAPMAN comes well by her role of the covenanting Mrs. McTavish, for her parents were old school Presbyterians. Her real name is Edith Van Renssaleer. She was born and educated in Rochester, N. Y. At the age of twenty the young schoolmarm left her books to study acting in New York. Her first teacher was Henry C. De Mille. She was with him in *"The Charity Ball,"* with William Gillette in *"Held by the Enemy,"* and toured for years in support of Louis James and Frederick Warde. She was also a widely popular stock "lead." One of these professional engagements led to her marriage in 1897 with James Neill and to the longest repertoire tour in theatrical annals. The veteran actress assumed her first role in the silent drama eight years ago. With her husband she is a member of the Paramount company, and has taken character parts in many film successes, including *"Old Wives for New," "The County Fair," "Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," "Bunty,"* and *"Pretty Sister of Jose."*

"Strongheart," "The Call of the North," "Soldiers of Fortune" and *"Classmates"* are roles or plays that will always be associated with the name of ROBERT EDESON, one of the most distinguished actors of the American stage. Last season he took the spokesman role in *"The World We Live In"* at the Al Jolson Theatre and en tour. Before he became a star in the celebrated productions above referred to, he was a favorite at the Empire. His *"Little Minister"* with Maude Adams, what delightful memories it brings back; that, and his Denton in *"Arizona,"* his swashbuckler in *"Under the Red Robe,"* his modern young men in *"The Climbers"* and *"The Greatest Thing in the World"*! The actor is a native of New Orleans, and got his first training under Colonel Sinn at the old Park Theatre, Brooklyn. He was a member of the famous Boston Museum, then of the Empire stock for Charles Frohman, then starred for many years under the H. B. Harris management. One of the first eminent players to go before the camera, Mr. Edeson for twelve years has done stage and screen work concurrently. William De Mille wrote his great success *"Strongheart,"* and Cecil De Mille ten years ago filmed his *"Call of the North."* At the latter's request Mr. Edeson consented to take the character role of Inspector Redding in the modern story of *"The Ten Commandments."* And he proves as resourceful and adept in scalawag depiction as in his earlier vein of romantic hero.

Out of black coal—so to speak—comes golden AGNES AYRES. She is a product of Carbondale, Ill., was educated in Chicago and first posed in Essanay. Miss Ayres came out of the murk to become widely celebrated as the O. Henry Girl; she was the heroine of no less than twenty-five adaptations of the late Sydney Porter's stories. Since joining the Paramount she has played many successful "leads" and starring roles. *"Held By the Enemy"* was her first Famous Players-Lasky picture. She scored decisive personal triumphs in *"Forbidden Fruit," "The Love Special," "The Affairs of Anatol," "Cappy Ricks,"* and *"The Sheik,"* with Rodolph Valentino. Her first stellar vehicle was *"The Lane That Had No Turning,"* followed by *"Bought and Paid For," "The Ordeal," "Borderland," "Clarence," "A Daughter of Luxury," "Racing Hearts," "The Heart Raider," "The Marriage Maker"* and *"Everyday Love."* She is perhaps the most skillful exemplar of the appealing and wistful in femininity—blue-eyed, golden-haired, petite. Cecil B. De Mille, who assembled many players of stellar worth for *"The Ten Commandments,"* counts it not the least of his achievements that he induced her to enact the brief but beautiful sequence of The Outcast, which is cut into the final scenes of the modern story.

Paramount Pictures



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This book is for sale only in theatres where "The Ten Commandments" is showing, can be ordered in quantity from Al. Greenstone, 1547 Broadway, N.Y. C.